

Commander's Call Topics



Dec. 4, 2009

"We are a nation at war, not an Air Force or an Army, but a nation. We will do whatever our nation requires us to do and we will step up to the challenges."

– Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force James A. Roy during a recent [visit to Afghanistan](#)

FROM AIR FORCE SENIOR LEADERS

[Air Force secretary discusses state of force at Global Warfare Symposium](#)

Air Force Secretary Michael B. Donley outlined the service's space accomplishments during the last year, which included 65 space launch missions from nine ranges, examined the increasing role of space in the strategic environment, and the challenges and changes that lay ahead.

► CURRENT ISSUES

[Afghanistan -- the way ahead: McChrystal sends message to troops](#)

Army Gen. Stanley A. McChrystal, commander of U.S. and NATO forces in Afghanistan, has posted a message to the troops on the way ahead. View story for full text.

[Air Force Global Strike Command officials assume ICBM mission](#)

Air Force Global Strike Command officials at Barksdale Air Force Base, La., assumed the Air Force's intercontinental ballistic missile mission Dec. 1. The ICBM transfer is part of a phased approach to unify all Air Force nuclear-capable assets under one command.

► PERSONNEL ISSUES

[Officials launch new Air Force community Web site](#)

Air Force officials have launched a new Web site to meet social and informational needs of Airmen, civilians, retirees and their families. The entire Air Force family is invited to log on to <http://www.usafservices.com>, the official community Web site of the Air Force. The Web site enables users to add friends, send messages and update their personal profiles to notify family and friends about themselves.

[Servicemembers Holiday Greetings now available online](#)

Members of the Joint Hometown News Service recently posted more than 8,000 holiday greetings from servicemembers and their families stationed around the world on its Web site. To see the holiday greetings, family members, servicemembers and their families can visit at <http://www1.dmasa.dma.mil/hometown/webpages/holidaygreetings.htm>.

[Records transfer marks historic milestone](#)

The recent transfer of approximately 177,000 official military personnel files from the Air Force to the National Archives and Records Administration marked a milestone as the final service to make its historical documents a part of the public record. While the Privacy Act no longer applies to archival records, exemptions of the Freedom of Information Act continue to protect the personal privacy of the members and their families and Social Security numbers are redacted before release. For more information and access to the national archives, visit www.vetrecons.archives.gov.

[Tops In Blue officials seek new talent, auditions open](#)

The Air Force's premier entertainment group, Tops In Blue, is seeking new performers to be part of the 2010 Tops In Blue World Tour. Auditions are open to all members of the Air Force, Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard, regardless of rank or career field. Applications and audition videos are due to the Air Force Entertainment office by Dec. 8. Visit the [Tops In Blue Web site](#) for more information.

DARPA officials launch network challenge competition

Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency officials will launch their [DARPA network challenge](#) competition Dec. 5 and have added a \$40,000 cash prize. The competition kicks off at 10 a.m. Eastern Standard Time, when DARPA officials will display 10 eight-foot, red weather balloons at undisclosed, publicly accessible sites around the continental United States. The balloons will remain at their locations throughout the day, until sunset. The first person to identify the precise latitudes and longitudes of all 10 balloons will win the prize.

GUARD AND RESERVE

Respite child care expands to all 50 states

The [Armed Services YMCA Respite Child Care](#) program provides up to 16 hours of child care for families of deployed Guard and Reserve personnel at their local YMCA.

CIVILIAN

3-year South Korea option opens up to federal employees

A 36-month tour option has been approved for federal employees accepting accompanied tours to select bases in South Korea, a move designed to create greater continuity of operations, increased long-term savings and an improved quality of life for civilian employees and their families. Job announcements for Air Force civilian jobs in South Korea can be found using the [Air Force civilian job site](#).

Air Force officials accepting nominations for public administration award

The David O. Cooke Excellence in Public Administration Award recognizes non-managerial career civilian employees who demonstrate great leadership potential as future federal executives. Nominees must have three to 10 years of civilian federal service by Dec. 31, 2009. For more information on this and other Air Force award programs, visit AFPC's ["Ask" Web site](#) or call the Total Force Service Center at 800-525-0102 or DSN 665-5000.

FAMILY, HEALTH AND SAFETY

Holiday stress

During the holiday season, some deployed Airmen may find themselves wrestling with a combination of stressors between Thanksgiving and the New Year. Many Airmen can find themselves overwhelmed with feelings of sadness or depression because they miss friends and family back home and are struggling with personal relationships. Or they are dealing with financial problems that are difficult and weigh on them heavily. Whatever the case, all Airmen are strongly encouraged to seek out and help their fellow Airmen with holiday stress.

FINANCES AND EDUCATION

Transfer of Post-9/11 G.I. Bill benefits easier with new virtual application

The new virtual Military Personnel Flight module will check an Airman's eligibility and allow him or her to fill out, sign and send the required statement of understanding to the Automated Records Management System virtually. Airmen will continue to use the Department of Defense Transfer Education Benefits Web site to complete their application. The vMPF module will simplify the process by allowing Airmen to see if they are eligible to apply and to complete their statement of understanding form online.

For additional information about the new vMPF module and the Post-9/11 G.I. Bill, go to the Post-9/11 G.I. Bill page on AFPC's secure ["Ask" Web site](#), or call the Total Force Service Center at 800-525-0102.

Trade Commission officials offer gift card tips

The Federal Trade Commission advises servicemembers and their families, as well as Defense Department civilians and contractors, to think before they buy holiday gift cards this season, and buy from trusted sources.

Anyone who has a problem with use of a gift card should contact the company that issued it as soon as possible. If you can't resolve the problem at that level, she added, file a complaint with the appropriate authorities. If that doesn't fix the problem, contact the [Federal Trade Commission](#) through its Web site or by calling 1-877-382-4357 toll-free. Complaints also may be filed with your state's attorney general.

RESOURCES

AF.mil

<http://www.af.mil>

Air Force Community

<http://www.afcommunity.af.mil/>

Air Force Highlights

<http://www.afoutreach.af.mil/usafhighlights/index.asp>

Military OneSource

<http://www.militaryonesource.com/>

Military HOMEFRONT

<http://www.militaryhomefront.dod.mil/>

Year of the Air Force Family

<http://www.af.mil/yoaff/index.asp>

www.MyAirForceLife.com

Air Force Personnel Center

<http://ask.afpc.randolph.af.mil/>

<http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/>

Air Reserve Personnel Center

<http://www.arpc.afrc.af.mil/>

Department of Defense

<http://www.defense.gov>

Department of Defense News

<http://www.defenselink.mil>

TRICARE

<http://www.tricare.mil>

U.S. Government Web site

<http://www.firstgov.gov/>

AIR FORCE HERITAGE TO HORIZONS

This Week in Air Force History

Dec. 5, 1949 – As a result of detection of a Soviet atomic explosion in August 1949, the Air Force diverted \$50 million from other projects to begin construction of radar sites in Alaska and other areas of the United States.

Dec. 6, 1995 – The first Airmen arrived in Tuzla, Bosnia, to prepare the airfield for some of the 20,000 U.S. and 40,000 NATO troops enforcing the peace accord reached at Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio.

Dec. 7, 1954 – The U.S. Air Force made the first successful recovery of a missile, a Navaho X-10, using a fully automatic approach and landing system at Edwards AFB, Calif.

Dec. 9, 1956 – The 463rd Troop Carrier Wing received the Air Force's first C-130 Hercules tactical cargo and troop carrier.

Dec. 10, 1954 – Col. (Dr.) John P. Stapp went 632 mph in a rocket-propelled sled run, and sustained greater G-forces than ever endured in recorded deceleration tests. The test determined that humans can survive ejection from aircraft at supersonic speeds.

For more information on Air Force heritage, visit the Air Force Link heritage section at <http://www.af.mil/information/heritage>.

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